

Ants

by [Laurie Klein](#) in the [July 2024](#) issue

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Come hither, for sugar . . .

Countless antennae sweep
the phantom scent trail left behind
like a runic text, by the vigilant scout
in the lead. O

pheromones! O antsy, listening
feet, swarming the green
pantries of summer,
each fattening bud candied

with nectar. Fabled ticklers,
do you really unpick those sealed lips,
coaxing that first blush—
a peony's silk? No. Although

I want to read your frantic vocation
this way, equate my own nipping
and thinning a similar instinct,
all for the garden's survival. I imagine

your secret anthem: *Come hither,
for sugar . . . Vamoose, aphid
and thrip, scar and wilt! Let us be
antiphons of collected sweetness, borne*

home, to the others. And if an ant's amen
is a full sac, or a mantra to store
and to swallow, like truth—well, it seems
small glories need no one, to bloom.